



2023

Attendance Policy



DALWALLINU

District High School

Educating students from Kindergarten to Year 12

PROCEDURES

Revised July 2023

BACKGROUND

Where a student is enrolled in a public school, the School Education Act 1999 (the Act) requires that the student attends the school on site or an educational program of the school elsewhere as directed by the Principal.

Consistent attendance and participation at school are essential factors in achieving social and academic learning outcomes. Schools that develop a supportive learning environment and an engaging and relevant curriculum create conditions conducive to regular school attendance.



ATTENDANCE IS EVERYBODY'S RESPONSIBILITY

It is important that students, staff and parents/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school.

Dalwallinu District High School:

- believes that students enrolled at school must attend school all day, every school day.
- monitors, communicates and implements strategies to improve regular school attendance.
- believes truanting can place a student in unsafe situations and impact on their learning future employability and life choices.
- believes attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the community.

This course of action has been endorsed by the School Council and school staff as a means of ensuring that the focus of students, at the school, remains one of academic success.

Melissa Harms – Principal Dalwallinu DHS

Nat Wallis – School Council Chair Dalwallinu DHS

Revised July 2023



ATTENDANCE RECORDS

Dalwallinu District High School will:

- Keep accurate attendance records for every student enrolled at the school.
- Record whether a student’s absence was authorised or unauthorised.
- Issue a leave pass to a student who has been granted permission to leave the school unaccompanied by a responsible adult.
- Record a student as:
 - a) Present for a half day when the student has attended at least two hours of instruction.
 - b) Attending if they are on a school-approved activity.
 - c) An authorised absence during the period of suspension.
 - d) An authorised absence if they are absent due to cultural/religious events.

Guidelines:

- Students who arrive late or leave early, but still attend two hours of instruction, are recorded as attending a half day.
- All students enrolled in the school are required to have their attendance recorded, irrespective of where the educational program is delivered. This includes students under a Section 24 Arrangement (see Enrolment policy) and those with a Notice of Arrangements that involves a component of school attendance.
- Authorised absences for religious observance or cultural reasons are best negotiated prior to the absence to avoid repetitive follow-up on the school’s behalf and to support planning for the student.
- Leave passes allow students to be readily recognised by police and other agencies when legitimately off school site during school hours.

MANAGEMENT OF NON-ATTENDANCE

The Principal or nominee will:

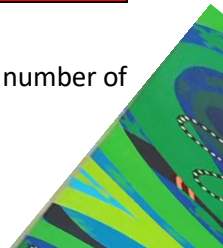
- Request an explanation from the student’s parent or responsible person when a student has been absent from school and an acceptable explanation has not been provided.
- Manage absences in conjunction with the alternative provider for students participating in alternative attendance arrangements under Section 24 of the Act.
- Refer a student to the Student Tracking Coordinator when he or she is deemed to be a ‘child whose whereabouts is unknown.
- Organise a parent/teacher meeting and/or case conference at the earliest opportunity to identify the issues related to the non-attendance and plan for improvement once regular attendance falls below 90%.
- Document all attendance improvement plans.


Guidelines:

- Student attendance is considered to be:

Regular (90% or above)	Indicated (80%-90%)	Moderate (60%-80%)	Severe (Less than 60%)
-------------------------------	----------------------------	---------------------------	-------------------------------

- Where a student’s attendance falls below 90% and acceptable reasons have not been provided for a number of absences, further investigation may assist the return to regular attendance.



- 
- In most instances, where an acceptable explanation for the absence has been provided, further action is not required.

MANAGEMENT OF CONTINUED NON-ATTENDANCE

If school attendance or engagement in an educational program is not successfully restored through consultation with an appropriate network or regional officer, the principal or nominee will request the parent attends a formal meeting. At the formal meeting, the principal or nominee will:

- ensure any factors preventing attendance or participation are explored;
- request the parent engages with alternative strategies to improve attendance;
- document a formal attendance improvement plan.

The Principal will refer the matter to the Director of Education (DOE) where:

- A formal meeting has been unable to secure parental engagement and improvement in school attendance.
- It is determined that either prosecution of the parent or application to the Children's Court for a Responsible Parenting Order is appropriate.

IMPORTANCE OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Student achievement: The likelihood of success in learning is strongly linked to regular attendance and appropriate participation in educational programmes. Students who have poor patterns of attendance are at risk of not achieving their potential.

Non-attendance: Non-attendance at school can occur for a range of reasons including:

- the student is unwell.
- the Principal has asked that the student remain home due to a communicable disease.
- the student is absent with a valid reason in the opinion of the Principal
- the student is absent without a valid reason in the opinion of the Principal (but with parent or carer consent) e.g., staying home for birthdays.
- the student is absent without parent or carer knowledge.

All non-attendance by students should be viewed as critical when it begins to impact on the learning and health and well-being outcomes of students.

Students at risk: Early intervention for students at risk of developing irregular patterns of attendance is crucial so that these patterns may be reversed.

Indicators of students who are risk include the following:

- frequent lateness
- leaving school early
- missing lessons
- being the victims of bullying and harassment
- learning difficulties
- many days absent, either through illness, unexplained reasons or family commitments;
- unresolved issues with school personnel (staff or students)
- social or emotional issues
- difficulties at times of transition
- health issues experience by the student and/or family members Intervention strategies need to be put in place regardless of the age of the student.



The Principal or appointed member will make contact parents and arrange for an interview with the parents and student in order to encourage attendance.

Parent notification: All reasons for explained absence require contact to be made to the school by the parent.

Major School events: Students are required, as a condition of the school enrolment agreement, to attend all School major events. These events include but are NOT limited to the following: Inter-house sporting carnivals, Year 10 Graduations, Awards Night's, Year level camps, and academic activities associated with a year group.

Exception where a Loss of Good Standing is in place or special circumstances as approved by the Principal.

Non-attendance at major School events will need to be supported by a doctor's certificate with a letter from parent / guardian and a reasonable explanation as to who the student is absent.

Where a student misses 90% of major school events due to non-attendance and unreasonable explanations, they will be ineligible to be in the running for awards and attendance to larger camps and excursions may be at risk.

Student work: Upon return to school after an absence, it is a Senior School student's responsibility to see teachers about missed lessons and /or assessments missed. Parents should monitor progress carefully. It is the school policy for teachers NOT to provide work prior to a planned absence (like a family holiday) so parents should not request this.

Absentee protocols: A student may not leave the grounds for any purpose during the school day without special leave from the principal or from those to whom he/she delegates his/her authority. Secondary students (or their parents) must sign the exit and sign-in forms at reception on departure and return. Primary students must be signed out by a parent/guardian at administration.

All parents are asked to note the protocols relating to student absence. Before school commences on the day of the absence, please inform the school using one of the following methods:

1. Send an e-mail to the Senior School via:
Dalwallinu.DHS@education.wa.edu.au
2. Phone the front office after 8am on 9661 1204

Daily attendance recording and monitoring processes: All teachers will complete an attendance check within the first ten minutes of the school day, all attendance records are recorded on Integris. A daily report is then emailed to all teachers to check and monitor regularly with appropriate action taken if necessary. An automated SMS service then sends SMS, at 10.30am, to those parents who have not notified the school of their child's absence.

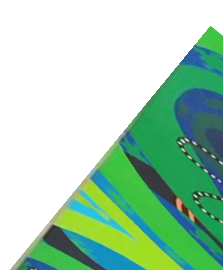
Attendance reports are checked at the end of each week by the Principal and designated attendance officer who will then follow up on any unexplained absences for the week.

Arrival at School: Students are not to arrive on school grounds before 8.30am. A duty teacher is assigned to supervise students between 8.30 and 8.45am. Classrooms are opened at 8.45am and the siren will sound at 8.55am to signify the start of the school day. All students are to report to their class/form room until the second siren sounds at 9.00am.

Late arrivals: Any student arriving at school after the first bell is required to report to the front office where they will be issued with a late slip to hand to their class/form teacher. **Students are NOT to go straight to class if they are late.**

Early Leave: Having arrived at school, students are to remain at school for the entire day. Any early departures are to be registered through the front office where a leave pass will be issued. Once a leave pass is issued, duty of care is transferred to the parent.

Reporting to Parents: Semester reports will include the number of absences and attendance percentage.





Family holidays: Whilst the School acknowledges that holidays are an enriching experience, by law every student is expected to attend school every day. We ask all parents to be mindful of the importance of continuity in the implementation of curriculum and learning. **Please use scheduled school holidays for personal holiday planning.**

Requests for family holiday absence during term time: For parents who request a student to be absent for holiday periods in excess of two days; the following protocol is requested:

- I. Send an email or letter to the Principal outlining the reason and length of absence acknowledging understanding of the School's attendance policy.
- II. One month's notice of intention would be reasonable.

Requests for family personal leave during term time: Parents who wish to take students out of school time for the purposes of family personal leave in excess of two days are asked to send an email or letter to the Principal, outlining the reason and length of absence and acknowledge of the School's attendance policy.

At risk students: With regards to students at risk due to poor attendance, a case management process will be used to encourage a student to attend school more regularly. The attendance team will consist of the Principal, Primary or Secondary Deputy, AIEO and School Chaplain.

Students who fall below a 90 per cent attendance (10 days, or 20 half days in one semester), are deemed to be at risk.



